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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JACKY ROSEN, a Senator from the State of Nevada.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God our Father, we want to serve You as You desire. Lord, make us alert to the needs of those You seek to touch, providing us with opportunities to transform hurting people.

Use our lawmakers to do Your will on Earth as You empower them to be ambassadors of reconciliation. Lord, give them such winsome dispositions that they will bless even those who are hard of heart and withered in spirit. May our legislators comfort those who are brought low by sorrow and lift those who are bowed by life's burdens.

Lord, during this season of Thanksgiving, inspire each of us to be grateful every day.

We pray in Your precious Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, November 18, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the

Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JACKY ROSEN, a Senator from the State of Nevada, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Ms. ROSEN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADERSHIP TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022—Motion to Proceed—Resumed

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 4350, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 144, H.R. 4350, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2022 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on NDAA, last night, the Senate began the process to debate, amend, and ultimately pass our annual Defense spend-

ing bill. With Republican cooperation, we can adopt the motion to proceed and begin voting on amendments early today.

Let me say it again. With Republican cooperation, we can adopt the motion to proceed and begin voting on amendments today. We should work together and complete this important bill before the Thanksgiving holiday.

Last night's vote was overwhelmingly bipartisan, so there is no reason we can't come to an agreement very soon to begin debating amendments.

And there is already one important amendment that I want to mention: repealing the 2002 Iraq AUMF. This bipartisan measure was reported out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee earlier this year, and I said months ago that the Senate should hold a vote on it. The NDAA is a logical place to do so.

The Iraq war has been over for over a decade. An authorization passed in 2002 is no longer necessary for keeping Americans safe in 2021. It has been nearly 10 years since this particular authorization has been cited as a primary justification for a military operation, and there is a real danger to letting these legal authorities persist indefinitely. Repealing this AUMF will in no way hinder our national defense, nor will it impact our relationship with the people of Iraq.

I want to thank Chairman MENENDEZ, Senator KAINE, Senator YOUNG, and every Republican and Democratic cosponsor of the bill for working to bring this issue to the floor. And in the coming days, I hope we can come to an agreement on other commonsense amendments to strengthen the Defense bill so we can get it passed through the Senate as soon as possible.

BUILD BACK BETTER AGENDA

Madam President, on Build Back Better, now that President Biden has enacted his once-in-a-generation infrastructure bill, Democrats are taking the next steps toward passing the rest of his Build Back Better plan.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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